



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Testimony Presented Before the Public Health Committee

March 19, 2014

**Commissioner Jewel Mullen, MD, MPH, MPA
860-509-7101**

**House Bill 5542 – An Act Concerning The Recommendations Of The
Connecticut Emergency Medical Services Primary Service Area Task Force**

The Department of Public Health (DPH) would like to provide the following information on House Bill 5542.

House Bill 5542 makes much needed changes to Connecticut's Primary Service Area (PSA) system. The PSA system in Connecticut has remained relatively unchanged for the last quarter century. The current system no longer consistently serves the needs of the State, and is in need of modernization to address the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) challenges that face Connecticut today. Such modernization, however, also must preserve the "safety net" features of our existing system that assure the EMS needs of our citizens are met.

Presently, DPH can remove a Primary Service Area Responder (PSAR) in very limited circumstances. Such circumstances include when a municipality alleges and DPH finds that an emergency exists that threatens the public's "health, safety or welfare," when a municipality alleges and DPH finds that a PSAR has failed to meet pre-established performance standards or when the Commissioner determines it is in the best interest of patient care. It would be beneficial to municipalities and EMS providers were DPH afforded the latitude to address issues of service delivery before critical issues evolve into emergencies.

The PSA Task Force developed its final report with recommendations that advance the EMS system in Connecticut and gives DPH additional latitude in overseeing and monitoring the system.

It is important to note that DPH would require additional resources to implement the provisions of this bill, including additional staff to review all EMS plans and rate the local EMS providers, as well as provide a process for an anticipated increase in "removal of responder" cases. These required resources are not included in either the enacted budget or the Governor's recommended midterm adjustments.

***Phone: (860) 509-7269, Fax: (860) 509-7100, Telephone Device for the Deaf (860) 509-7191
410 Capitol Avenue - MS # 13GRE, P.O. Box 340308 Hartford, CT 06134
An Equal Opportunity Employer***

In the bill were to go forward, the Department also respectfully requests the following changes be made to the raised bill:

In line 38, please add the words "as requested" after the words "the Department of Public Health."

In line 50, please add the words "with periodic reviews with a 6 month time frame, subject to the approval of both municipality and the PSAR" after the words "performance standards."

In line 69, please add the word "rolling" in front of the words "three-month period."

In line 76, please add the words "in any rolling 12 month review period" after the word municipality.

In line 79, please change "any" to "mutually agreed upon."

In line 117, please add "or her designee" after the words "the Commissioner."

In line 119, please change the words "shall issue a determination" to "shall conclude its investigation."

Thank you for your consideration of the Department's views on this bill.